

JEFFERSON JOURNAL

September/October 2018

Efforts To Reduce Wildfire Risk
Fall Short, Buck Science

 **JPR** | Jefferson
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The Members' Magazine of Jefferson Public Radio

A woman with long red hair, wearing a light blue jacket and a black backpack, is walking away from the camera on a wide, sandy beach. In the background, a large, dark, triangular rock formation (Haystack Rock) stands prominently on the left side of the beach. The sky is overcast and grey. The overall mood is contemplative and serene.

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FEATURED

6 Efforts To Reduce Wildfire Risk Fall Short, Buck Science

By Tony Schick and Jes Burns

As wildfires continue to burn across the West, we take a step back to examine if the ways we're trying to lessen the overall risk is working. Our EarthFix team looked at fuels treatments and found things to be rather... lopsided.

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COVER: Manzanita and other low brush are targets of some prescribed
burns in central Oregon. Jes Burns, OPB/EarthFix

Jefferson Public Radio welcomes your comments:

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A New Normal

During the past several weeks the JPR news department has been at work covering one of the most active and destructive fire seasons in Southern Oregon and Northern California history. Our news team spent a number of intense days and nights covering the Carr Fire in Redding which killed eight people, destroyed over 1,000 homes and displaced tens of thousands of residents. JPR has served the Redding community for decades and we have deep relationships in the community. Our hearts go out to all those whose lives have been impacted by California's sixth most destructive wildfire and to the people who will be working to rebuild their lives for years to come.

As the Carr Fire became a top national story, JPR worked collaboratively with NPR and our public radio colleagues at KQED, San Francisco and Capital Public Radio, Sacramento to cover the story from multiple vantage points. Our reporters visited shelters where evacuees came together to help care for each other. We told the story of pet owners who needed a different kind of shelter -- one where they could remain with their pets, keeping their families together through the trauma. We documented the harrowing experiences of those who narrowly escaped as the fire spread faster and more unpredictably than firefighters expected. We were there as the community honored the lives of first responders who made the ultimate sacrifice helping their neighbors.

As the Carr Fire destroyed homes in Redding, several fires broke out in Oregon in Josephine, Jackson and Douglas Counties, causing evacuations and filling the Rogue and inland valleys with thick smoke. In Mendocino, the Mendocino Complex became California's biggest fire ever. Unhealthy air quality in the ensuing weeks caused the Oregon Shakespeare Festival to cancel plays in its outdoor Allen Elizabethan Theatre and move some performances to indoor venues, the Britt Festival canceled concerts on the hill including the entire closing weekend performances of the Britt Orchestra and sections of the Rogue River were closed.

The 2018 wildfire season feels like a watershed moment. Some are calling it a new normal. Hotter, more severe wildfires are inundating Southern Oregon and Northern California, and the entire West, despite average or above average rainy seasons during the past two years. Smoke so dense it's hard to see the mountains on some days is shaking our psyche as we're forced to stay indoors during a time of year we're accustomed to enjoy-

ing the warm summer days and cool nights that are so central to the quality of life in our region. An important component of our regional economy, revolving around summer tourism and outdoor recreational and cultural activities, is being threatened.

During the coming weeks and months we'll explore the aftermath of a fire season that is changing life in Southern Ore-

gon and Northern California. We'll continue to work with NPR and our public radio colleagues to examine public policy issues that are vital elements of living with fire in the West: Are wild lands and forests being managed effectively to reduce wildfire risk? In an environment where fire is a natural part of a healthy ecosystem, what planning steps should be taken to minimize the loss of human life and property? What is the role of thinning and prescribed burns in creating a healthy forest and reducing the intensity of destructive

wildfires? How will we pay the escalating cost to fight fires without impacting other essential government services? How do we manage smoke and minimize its economic impact? Will any of this matter if we don't address the detrimental effects of climate change? And, how do we develop climate change strategies if it is not recognized as a national priority?

As we participate in addressing these questions, we'll give voice to people in our region who are stakeholders in this issue -- scientists, lawmakers, biologists, ecologists, loggers, environmental groups, business leaders and citizens. We'll do our best to sort through the often competing "facts" and claims to provide a clearer understanding of the interrelated and sometimes complex issues that surround wildfires in the West. And, as with every issue we cover, we'll work to provide context, analysis and diverse perspectives that create constructive civic dialogue and engagement toward developing solutions to this challenging regional problem.

During the coming weeks and months we'll explore the aftermath of a fire season that is changing life in Southern Oregon and Northern California.



Paul Westhelle is
JPR's Executive Director.

Efforts To Reduce Wildfire Risk Fall Short, Buck Science

By Tony Schick and Jes Burns

As wildfires continue to burn across the West, we take a step back to examine if the ways we're trying to lessen the overall risk is working. Our EarthFix team looked at fuels treatments and found things to be rather ... lopsided.



JES BURNS, OPB/EARTHFIX



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On a cool spring morning outside Sisters, Oregon, the Wolf Creek Hotshots weaved their way through ponderosa pines, drip torches in hand.

They dropped flaming dollops of a diesel-gas mix, setting burgundy manzanita and grounded golden pine needles aflame. It catches easily, begins to spread, and all at once the forest smelled of campfire.

Each year, foresters here thin out trees, clear brush and light fires like this to burn off fuels and lower the risk of large, uncontrollable wildfires.

This commitment to the full suite of fuel treatments – especially burning – has helped make the Deschutes National Forest a model and a success story in the effort to reduce fuel loads and lower the risk of wildfire.

But getting these acres burned is no easy task, and across the West, foresters are falling short of what they need to do with fire as a tool. That leaves many efforts to treat fuels incomplete. Fire scientists say that's a problem.

A century of aggressive fire suppression left forests dense with too many trees, too much brush and too many dried-out leaves, twigs and needles. Combined with hotter and drier weather, those overloaded forests stoked a new era of extreme fire.

The timber industry and environmental groups alike recognize the need to rid the forest of those fuels before wildfire ignites them. As it stands, the Forest Service and Interior Department spend millions of dollars on hazardous fuels but treat a fraction of the acres needed each year to prevent the buildup from worsening.



JES BURNS, OPB/EARTHFIX

The West is way behind on reducing the buildup of hazardous fuels we created. And much of the work we do to reduce those fuels is missing the key ingredient: fire.

LEFT: Manzanita and other low brush are targets of some prescribed burns in central Oregon.

TOP: A member of the Wolf Creek Hotshots uses a drip torch to ignite the forest floor during a prescribed burn near Sisters, Oregon.

ABOVE: Forest crews burned more than 100 acres during a prescribed fire near Sisters, Oregon.



During mop-up, small groups of firefighters ensure logs and stumps are extinguished.

JES BURNS, OPB/EARTHFIX

Western lawmakers have called for more fuels reduction work and this year, Congress freed up more money in the Forest Service budget and loosened environmental regulations for such work. Sometimes that happens through controlled burning or mechanical activities like mowing. Most often it happens through selective logging projects known as thinning, which is often a pre-burning requirement – as well as an activity that can carry the added benefit of supporting rural jobs by generating timber.

On hundreds of thousands of acres of public lands, federal agencies have thinned forests without using prescribed fire, according to Forest Service data. But in the aim of reducing the spread or severity of wildfire, that is a recipe fire scientists say has proven to be at best ineffective and, at worst, has the potential to be counterproductive.

“Politically, we’ve heard this – that we’re going to log our way out of the fire problem. That’s popular with some elected officials,” Mark Finney, a fire behavior scientist with the Forest Service, said in a presentation at the agency’s fire lab in Missou-

la, Montana. “Well, science shows us that thinning and mechanical activities may be necessary for restoring forest structure and fuel conditions. But they’re not sufficient by themselves.”

Thinning forests is often a must, scientists like Finney said. We need a lot more of it. But it cannot replace fire.

“Without fire ... you’re not removing the fuels that other wildfires depend on,” Finney said. “Logging is called logging for a reason. It removes logs. Most logs are still there after the fire.”

A Big Catcher’s Mitt

Done right, forest thinning and fire treatments can work. Many say Sisters, Oregon, is proof.

“It makes it a lot easier for firefighters to come in here and catch it if there’s something blowing off the Cascades towards the Sisters,” said Allison Dean, a fire effects monitoring coordinator for the Bureau of Land Management. “This is part of a big catcher’s mitt.”



FIGURE 1 Thinning And Burning In The Northwest

The chart shows the U.S. Forest Service’s inventory of acres treated since 2000 in Oregon and Washington. Agencies also treat forests with other methods, such as mowing, chipping or burning in piles.

Source: U.S. Forest Service Forest Activity Tracking System

On scene for the prescribed burn this spring, Dean followed behind the line, taking weather readings and checking that the fire didn't burn too much or too little to be effective.

"What we're trying to do is open it up again, return it to more of its natural habitat," Dean said.

Crews have been thinning, mowing and burning the Deschutes National Forest for at least a decade. They think that work saved Sisters last summer, helping 675 firefighters stave off the Milli Fire as it raced toward town.

It has been praised as an example of how proactive forest work can prevent deadly wildfire disasters.

But even in the Deschutes, treatments fall short of historic burning rates by 30,000 acres every year. While burning at historic rates is an unattainable goal given how many people now live nearby, foresters use that to see just how far behind they are. They thin the forest about twice as much as they burn it.

Failing to follow through on prescribed burns can leave a dangerous amount of fuel on the land.

In 2015, the Canyon Creek Fire destroyed 43 homes in Eastern Oregon. Patches of land around those homes had been thinned, but it didn't change fire behavior as foresters had hoped. The fire found plenty of fuel on the ground.

One primary reason for that: prescribed burns were either never planned or never completed, a Forest Service review team found.

"The cumulative effect of all the treatments on that landscape, it doesn't appear it did much to alter the spread or intensity of fires through that area," said Frankie Romero, who served on the review team for the Forest Service.

"Certainly there's been lots of good thinning. But the pace of the surface fuel treatments, particularly the prescribed fire, to follow those up, need to keep pace," Romero said in his review of the fire.

A Thinning Argument

There are many reasons to thin an overgrown forest. Trees too tightly packed are stressed for light and water. They are prone to insect infestation and disease. Clearing a forest can lower the chances of a fire getting into the crowns of trees and give firefighters more room to operate. The logs taken out for all those reasons feed mills, often in places where drop-offs in timber harvests since the early 1990s have crushed local economies.

"I'll argue with any of the communities that say you shouldn't be doing any thinning," said Mike Wheelock, owner of Grayback Forestry, a wildland firefighting and forestry contractor based in Grants Pass, Oregon.

Fuels reduction used to be 80 percent of Grayback's workload, Wheelock said, with wildfire suppression making up the rest. That's now essentially flipped.

"Anything's better than what you have now," he said. "I could show you just miles and miles of dead trees. And you know, overgrown forests. And they need to be thinned. Before you can start lighting matches."

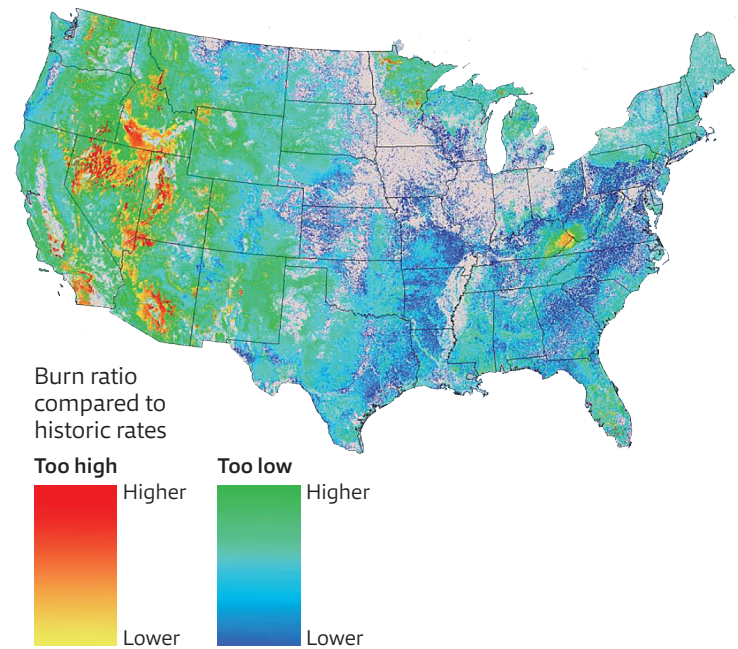


FIGURE 2 A Deficit Of Natural Fire

Most areas of the West burn far too little compared to before European settlement. The map shows where current fire, calculated as burn probability, is too high or too low compared to historic estimates.

Source: Mark Finney, Charles Mchugh; U.S. Forest Service Rocky Mountain Research Station.

Many forests are so overgrown, fire ecologists and land managers fear burning them without logging first would likely result in a danger to the public or a forest burned too severely.

The inverse – logging without fire – provides a false sense of security, said James Agee, forestry professor emeritus at the University of Washington. In 2005, Agee authored a set of principles for forest treatments that many still use as a guide for the work.

"The average citizen ... they hear that 'Oh, thinning is good and it's going to create a situation where my home is going to be saved,'" Agee said. "But it's just one part of the equation."

You need to think not just about what you take out of the forest when you log but what you leave behind, Agee said.

Unless you plan to rake and bag millions of acres of national forests, fire is the only way to reduce the so-called fine fuels on the forest floor that help wildfire spread.

"And if that's not going to occur, there's no way you're ever going to log your way out of the problem. You're probably going to make it worse," Agee said. "Thinning by itself is not good."

When the average person looks at a forest they see trees as fuel for wildfire, said veteran fire ecologist Ron Wakimoto. They should be looking down at the litter and duff, which are layers of decaying material on the forest floor. In the right conditions, Wakimoto said he's seen 100-foot flames off pine needles alone.

Wakimoto said it can actually be counterproductive: besides the potential of leaving additional debris behind, when you thin a forest you open up the canopy and allow more sunlight in. You've also opened it up to let more wind through. So those layers of litter and duff dry out faster.

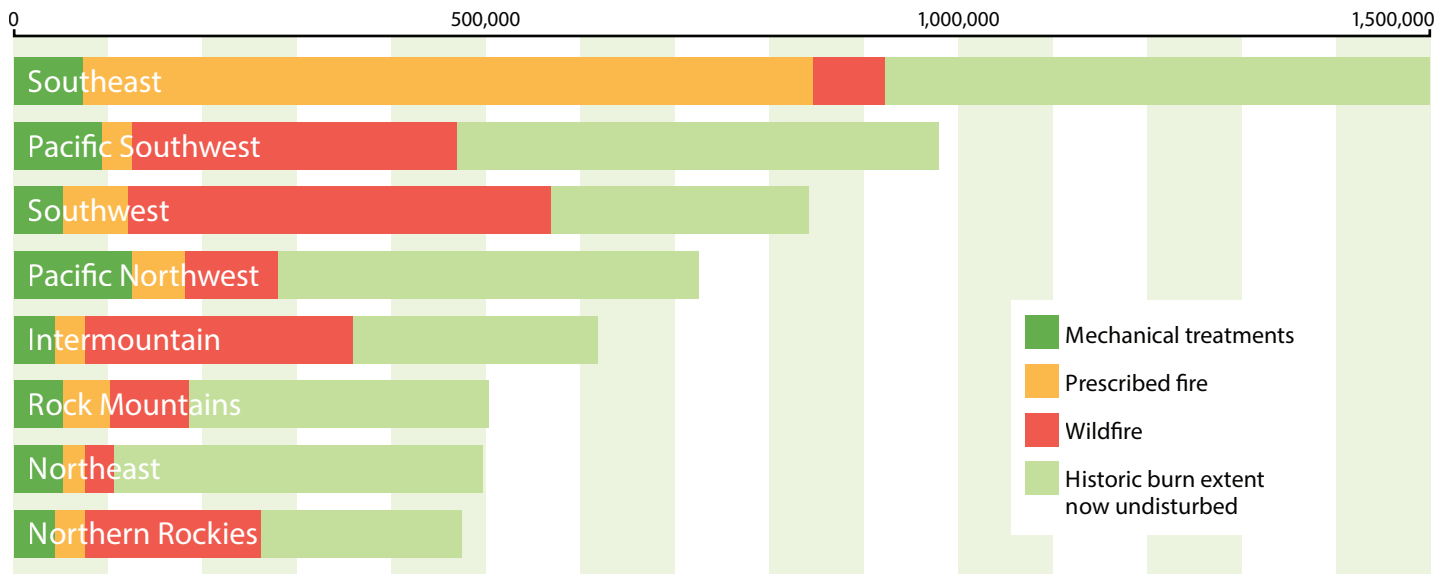


FIGURE 3 Annual Forest Treatments Compared To Historic Burning

In all regions of the U.S., annual acres disturbed by wildfire and our treatments are much lower than historically burned. While in the Southeast prescribed fire is common, it's much less so in the Northwest and California.

Source: Nicole Vaillant and Elizabeth Rhinehardt, U.S. Forest Service



Thinning, mowing and prescribed fire are used in Ponderosa pine forests to maintain an open forest floor.

"Now that the forest is open, the forest floor is drier, and the fire can move even quicker to the houses, or whatever you did the thinning to protect," said Wakimoto. "A lot of people who are just thinking about woody fuels are not thinking that."

Further And Further Behind

In April, after years of attempts, Congress ended the Forest Service's reliance on borrowing firefighting dollars from its other programs.

"We are ready to go on and talk about how we're going to get back into the business of preventing forest fires," Oregon Democrat Ron Wyden told colleagues in the Senate.

It was one of many efforts to promote forest fuels reduction.

In May, Northwest lawmakers announced \$80 million in the new farm bill toward forest thinning. Late last year, the House passed a bill aimed at greatly reducing the barriers to

thinning projects on federal forests. Around the same time, Sen. Maria Cantwell, D-Wash., introduced sweeping wildfire legislation in 2017 that would have prioritized thinning to generate new lumber products, while also calling for more prescribed burns.

"By targeting our most vulnerable pine forests, this science-based pilot program gives the Forest Service tools to address wildfire in our most vulnerable forests and prioritizes cross-laminated timber," Cantwell said at the time.

"We have neglected thinning to make our forests resistant to fire for far too long. We must change that," co-sponsor and Oregon Democratic Sen. Jeff Merkley said in a statement.

Thinning gets a mention in most public statements about treating fuels in the West. Burning does not. This was true for a September memo from Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke urging his staff to be aggressive reducing fuels.

While scientists have been discussing fire as a crucial management tool since the 1940s, it has yet to gain a foothold in policy.

It doesn't help local economies the way logging can. It has a non-zero chance of burning out of control. And even if it grew more politically popular, it remains thwarted by red tape and logistics.

Thinning can happen year-round but foresters need the right conditions to light a fire, leaving a narrow window of suitable days in the spring and fall. State and federal agencies just don't have the resources to burn as much as they'd want to in such a short span. Over the past year, the Deschutes National Forest had 30 suitable burn days.

Controlled burns require air quality permits because of the smoke. At the edge of wildlands near communities, those can be hard to get.

And then there's the money issue. If you're willing to remove some larger trees, thinning can at least help pay for itself

as a timber sale. But money for burning comes entirely out of agency budgets. On the Deschutes, that's up to \$250 per acre plus ongoing maintenance costs.

"It's kind of like mowing the lawn. It's not like it's one and done once we have our fuels consumed," Sisters District Ranger Ian Reid said.

The end goal in all this fuels reduction would get the forest back to more self-regulating. But in areas close to town, that's always going to require intervention, Reid said.

The reality is both thinning and burning are going to need to increase dramatically if they're going to make a noticeable difference during projected longer, hotter fire seasons. Nicole Vaillant, a Forest Service researcher in Bend, found the combination of thinning, prescribed fire and wildfire affects only 45 percent of lands each year that historically would have burned.

That debt compounds. For all the investment in fuels treatments, we are still trending in the wrong direction, like a garage where old boxes and junk pile up faster than the annual yard sale can offload them.

"We're getting farther and farther behind," Vaillant said. "We're getting deeper and deeper into the hole."

EDITOR'S NOTE: Reporting for this story was supported by the Institute for Journalism and Natural Resources.

About Earthfix EarthFix is a public media partnership of Oregon Public Broadcasting, Idaho Public Television, KCTS9 Seattle, KUOW Puget Sound Public Radio, Northwest Public Radio and Television, Jefferson Public Radio, KLCC and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

About this story

Why does this story matter?

Wildfire is one of the West's biggest issues. We spend millions to treat an overload of fuel for those wildfires in our forests. Many are advocating we spend more. This story focuses on what is most effective if foresters are to make progress in reducing the risk of extreme fire behavior.

What questions did we set out to answer?

- What landscape treatments are most effective in reducing the risk of wildfire?
- How often are we using those treatments?

What do we know now?

- There is a significant overload of hazardous fuels in the West. Forests have become too dense and too cluttered, in large part because we have been suppressing wildfires for so long.
- There is broad acceptance that these fuels need to be dealt with to reduce our risk of large wildfires, but at our current rates fuels are accumulating faster than we are treating them.
- The most effective treatment for reducing fire severity is to thin and use a prescribed burn. But that is not the most common treatment in much of the West. In the Northwest and California, thinning without burning is common.
- There are many logistical, political and financial hurdles to prescribed burning, which contribute to the disparity in treatments.

Who is in this story?

Not everyone we spoke with appears in the story. We spoke with several fire scientists with the U.S. Forest Service and various universities. Also in this story are district rangers and federal agency staff who are working to reduce fuel loading on public

lands. We also spoke with multiple people who do work in the forests on thinning or burning projects and fire suppression. We quoted one person who runs a forestry company, and does both fire suppression and fuels treatments. This story also features public statements from elected officials.

What's the evidence?

Numerous studies have shown the combination of mechanical treatments such as thinning combined with prescribed burning to be the most effective way to treat fuels, and that treatments without both of these are largely ineffective (see a literature review of several studies at www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0378112716302626). Some research has indicated thinning alone can reduce fire severity (Martinson and Omi, 2003). There is some speculation as to whether that is dependent on the conditions of the fire when it enters the treated area: for instance, a canopy fire is unlikely to sustain as a canopy fire. Multiple studies have indicated thinning alone can increase burn severity compared to untreated sites (Raymond and Peterson, 2005, Wimberly et al., 2009; Graham et al., 2012).

Forest Service data shows that. Using satellite data over a four-year span, researchers at the Forest Service also tracked how many acres are affected each year by mechanical treatments, prescribed fire and wildfire.

How can you respond or get involved?

You can contact elected officials, the Forest Service, the Interior Department or state forestry agencies about wildfire management. You can contact us about our coverage at earthfix@opb.org.

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For all the damage it does to the human world as presently organized, fire is far from being an ecological catastrophe; quite the opposite.

The Other Side Of Smoke

Let me be clear. I hate – HATE – the smoke that seems to have become our fifth season in southern Oregon, inserting itself between the blossoming of summer and the rains of fall. It is a misery, and the fires that produce the smoke are always a worry and sometimes a terror.

That's me speaking as a 21st century Euro-American home-owner, which of course is what I am. But for the remainder of this essay, I choose to shrug off that identity. As a naturalist, I'm well aware that many plants and animals in our region are adapted to – and in some cases depend on – fire: mountain bluebirds and lodgepole pines, morel mushrooms and camas lilies, beargrass and huckleberries. I also know that native peoples skillfully used fire as a management tool, maintaining oak savannahs rich with acorns and deer. For all the damage it does to the human world as presently organized, fire is far from being an ecological catastrophe; quite the opposite.

To try and see the other side of smoke, let's take an imaginative journey into the life of one of the most fire-dependent birds in the world, the Black-backed Woodpecker. First, a few facts. Black-backed Woodpeckers are found across the boreal forests of Canada, and down the great mountain ranges of the western U.S.: the Rockies, Cascades, and Sierra Nevada. Within this huge range, they are almost never found away from recently burned forests. Black-backs are highly specialized to feed on the larvae of wood-boring beetles, and these are abundant in severely burned forest, performing the ecologically important service of hastening the decay of snags and thus releasing their nutrients into the soil. To extract the larvae from fire-hardened wood, Black-backs have adaptations giving them extraordinarily powerful drilling, including only three toes on each foot. In recognition of this three-toed condition, we'll call our heroine Trey. Here is her story:

The smoke came in from the southwest, thick and yellow-gray, drifting over the Cascade crest. The scent filled Trey with restless energy. Only a week before, her first nesting attempt had failed. Two of the chicks had starved to death despite the tireless efforts of Trey and her mate to find enough beetle larvae to feed them, and the single fledgling, small and weak, had been easy prey for a Cooper's Hawk. Now, with nothing to hold her to this territory – a green expanse of pine forest that harbored little food for a Black-backed Woodpecker – Trey set out to find the fire.

The wind had carried the smoke far, and by the time Trey reached the burn weeks later, the fire had passed. What she found was paradise. Like most fires, this one had left behind an ecological mosaic: expanses of blackened snags, areas of scorched but living trees, and mysteriously untouched patches. And Trey was not the first arrival – drawn by the scent of smoke, wood-boring beetles had already taken up residence, laying their eggs in the dead and dying trees, and were already being pursued by resident Hairy Woodpeckers and the first pioneering Black-backs.

The next spring brought an abundant display of wildflowers and a bumper crop of morels to the burn, but Trey paid no attention to such ground-level events. The wood of the burned snags positively vibrated with the gnawing of beetle larvae, and a whole community of woodpeckers had gathered for the feast: black-backs and hairys, white-heads and Lewis's and flickers. Trey was perfectly at home, her black back making her almost invisible against the charred snags as she pounded into the hardest wood. Black-backs had flocked to the burn from far and wide, and Trey had never had so many suitors. She chose well, and in that first year on the burn, she and her mate fledged a full brood of five fine young.

In the natural cycle of post-fire succession, the burn would have remained prime woodpecker habitat for 4 or 5 years, after which beetle populations would have dwindled, and most of the younger black-backs would have dispersed to find more recent burns. In this case, the natural cycle had no chance to play out.

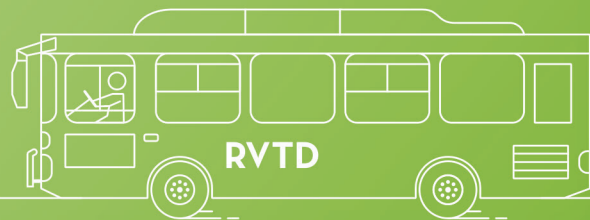
As the snow melted in the second spring after the fire, the quiet of the burn was shattered by the rumble of logging trucks and the whine of chainsaws. Salvage logging had begun, and while some economic value from the dead trees was gained, much was lost. The soil was compacted, the recovering herb and shrub community was crushed, and the nutrients held in the decaying wood were hauled away. And of course a forest of snags that was home to a diverse community of woodpeckers and cavity-nesting birds was destroyed.

Trey retreated to the far side of the burn and began to excavate a nest hole with her mate, but one day he

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RECORDINGS

CODY GROWE

Listening To What Is No Longer There

Recordings seem to offer us a double promise: they can bring us closer to the music we love, and music can be caught and made as durable and solid as any sculpture. But if a share of the power of music lives in its being transient and fleeting, or momentous, limited, and already disappearing, maybe those two promises work against one another. Recordings can bring us closer, but they can't make music stay. Music lives in time as it passes and in sound softly falling away.

Recordings *have* brought me closer to the music and also to places I have never been to the Old Metropolitan Opera house which is gone, or to listen in on Mahler conducting Verdi's *Otello* back when it was "contemporary music". Recordings offer the chance to fly far away from home and out into the world of music as it is elsewhere or once was. And that is as real as anything heard live because music lives in our experience- it lives where we are. Until the sounds are heard and felt, they are just sounds, not music. So maybe you can catch sounds, but not music.

Whether live or on recording, to be really close to music, in my experience, is to be thrilled and terrified that it will not last, and to cling or grasp onto it with intense emotional response as it flies away into oblivion. As if I could engrave it into memory as a charm against grief at its disappearing. So in my own way, I am trying my best to make a recording of the music I hear, in the grooves of my brain instead of the grooves of a wax cylinder or a shellac gramophone disc, the magnetic whispers of tape or the delicate on-off of digital bits, bytes and bandwidths.

Maybe we experience beauty most intensely and most personally as something slips away and is gone. Part of the emotional power of music might be that even as we perceive it, it is disappearing, echoing in the acoustic and buzzing in our sensing, breathing bodies. For decades I have tried to swim upstream, listening to the oldest recordings I could find, straining through scratchy, static-y old stuff, searching for the real(est) sounds and for hints on context and style. All that in order to make sound into music again by *hearing* it back into life. I have memorized miles of sheet-music and tried to catch every strain heard at concerts, hoping to get it to stick and keep blessing me forever. I have tried my best to make the music stay, and it has always slipped from my grasp. But in slipping away, it sings its own orison, and my impressions are like a wake, where each keening mourner

cries music's name as the sweet tones fade.

But what's all this moaning and wailing about? The music library at JPR towers solidly from floor to ceiling, filling a great room, stacked and compact in alphabetical and thematic order, definitely there, to be enjoyed for decades. We have the greatest

players and orchestras and conductors in little magic containers. That should console me in my grief and longing for connection with music, and it does, but it's just a collection of recordings, any one of which might *become* music the moment it glides past a listening human heart and mind. That's where you come in. We provide the sounds, and you, dear listener, provide the music by lifting those sounds back up into gleaming meaning, just where the recording caught them and turned them to sounds.

From Caruso at the old Met in 1910 starring in the first live opera broadcast on American radio, up to the music you might be listening to right now, the airwaves of live broadcast promise to convey you into connection with music. And unlike having a million albums at home, when you listen to JPR, you hear music as it flies and you get a share in that excitement of being a part of something happening that might never happen just the same way again. Because it is in the air, on air, and passing by, some of the poignancy keeps us pinned. When I have a driveway moment with music on JPR, it's not to find out what it was or who played it, but to do my best to hear it. It's funny that after all these years in music, I still don't "have" it, can't hold it, and I only seem to need it and to long for it more and more deeply. May your thirst for music grow, even as you drink deep in listening to JPR.

Whether live or on recording, to be really close to music, in my experience, is to be thrilled and terrified that it will not last, and to cling or grasp onto it with intense emotional response as it flies away into oblivion.



Code Growe is a performing musician, teacher, and storyteller working on social renewal through art and imagination. Born in California, he studied music at Musikseminar in Hamburg, and at McGill University in Montreal before settling in Ashland. In addition to music and public radio, he enjoys gardening, hiking and folklore studies.

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Game Of Drones

The attempted assassination of Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro last month using a pair of drones armed with explosives made international headlines and is a harbinger of future high-profile attacks using common drones.

Of course drones have been being used to kill people for many years now. Since 9/11, the US government has carried out hundreds of drone strikes against terrorist targets in Afghanistan, Libya, Pakistan, and Yemen.

Drones, or “Unmanned Aerial Vehicle” (UAV), are piloted by remote control as well as onboard computers. They were first used for surveillance and reconnaissance then were weaponized for the purpose of killing the bad guys.

The CIA has killed a lot of terrorists with weaponized drones. They’ve also killed some civilians too in the process. According the New America Foundation, the US government killed around 2,500 “jihadist militants” with drone strikes. Different organizations have estimated that between 10 and 20 percent of those killed in those strikes were civilians.

Drones are an example of how technology is created for one purpose and then is “redomained” for another. Sometimes this process can be for the common good, other times it’s a disaster. Most time the creators of these technologies don’t think about those possible future consequences beforehand. It’s not that they don’t care, but that it’s really difficult to do that, especially with emerging technologies that have to precedents to analyze. Technology is created and released into the wild, then it follows its own course. It evolves. This is the nature of technology. We like to think that we humans fully control technology because we are the ones who created it, but we do not.

Today, you can buy drones online for as low as \$100. Higher end commercial-grade models retail for between \$20,000 to \$50,000. Drones can be equipped with onboard video cameras that provide a live video feed back to the remote pilot. In 2014, some guy used one of these to fly over public parks, people’s backyards, vineyards, and forests to capture footage of people having sex outdoors. He used that footage to create a short film called “Drone Boning”. This raises some immediate privacy concerns. In our drone-laden future, drones with cameras are mobile and are everywhere, eroding your precious privacy even more. (But hey, smile for the camera!)

On December 7, 2016, Amazon delivered its first package with a fully autonomous drone. The service is called Amazon Prime Air and it promises aerial delivery of packages in under 30 minutes. According to Amazon’s website, “It looks like science fiction, but it’s real. One day, seeing Prime Air vehicles will be as normal as seeing mail trucks on the road.”

We like to think that we humans fully control technology because we are the ones who created it, but we do not.

As technology evolves, we change and adapt. If you’re old enough to remember a time before cell phones were common, you might recall how weird it was to be walking down the street and hear somebody talking to themselves only to realize that they were holding a phone their ear. Today, people walk down the street talking into Bluetooth headsets and we don’t even notice. It’s just part of the landscape. Then came texting. I

used to get annoyed by people walking down the sidewalk texting. Now I don’t even notice that. Sometimes I’m the person walking down the sidewalk texting or pulling up a map. Today, it’s not uncommon to see people texting while driving. (I’m never that person. Please don’t ever be that person.)

Meanwhile, back in Caracas, President Maduro was giving a speech on a platform while flanked by all of his top military leadership when two drones with explosives strapped to them were detonated. The assassins missed their target and not long after the attack 6 suspects were arrested.

According to Venezuelan Interior Minister Nestor Reverol, the suspects used two DJI M600 drones that were each carrying 1 kilogram of C-4 explosive. The DJI M600 is a professional-grade drone used primarily by photographers and filmmakers. It retails for \$5,000.

“The barriers to entry have been lowered so much that literally anyone with enough money to afford a drone and the technical competence of a 12-year-old can pull off an attempt like this,” said Colin Clarke, an international security policy analyst at the RAND corporation, commenting on the incident.

“This [drone attacks] is a very serious, looming threat that we are currently unprepared to confront,” said Department of Homeland Security undersecretary for intelligence and analysis David Glawe and DHS deputy general counsel Hayley Chang in a recent joint testimony to Congress. “Today we are unable to effectively counter malicious use of drones.”

Meanwhile, the unscathed Maduro appears to have a different protection strategy in mind.

“The drones came after me,” Maduro said. “But there was a shield of love that always protects us. I’m sure I’ll live for many more years.”



Scott Dewing is a technologist, teacher, and writer. He lives with his family on a low-tech farm in the State of Jefferson.

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Hot Air

Fire season is drawing to a close, political season is upon us, and I'm thinking about hot air. There's been a great deal of it this year, and there's plenty more to come.

First, the fires. It was 113 degrees in Redding on that Thursday evening when the Carr Fire swept into town and burned down hundreds of homes. 113 is not unknown in Redding in the summer, but scientists who have studied the tornado of fire that formed say the heat was the primary component; it was not very windy on July 26th.

The column of fire not only burned anything in its path, it uprooted trees and twisted human-built structures like utility towers into unrecognizable shapes. The Carr fire destroyed more than a thousand homes in all, and caused or contributed to the deaths of nearly ten people. And within two weeks, it wasn't even the biggest fire in Northern California.

This didn't use to happen. Now fires burning 100,000 acres or more have become routine, as have weeks of the summer spent indoors by the air conditioner, avoiding wildfire smoke that reaches hazardous levels. So what changed? Hot air, and lots of it. Hot water, too, when you remember how warm the ocean is getting.

The situation goes far beyond the immediate fire zones. Because now people who live in urban areas far from the edge of the forest get constant reminders of what is going on miles away; we are all learning terms like "pyrocumulus" and frequently checking apps and websites for air quality information.

The Oregon Shakespeare Festival, at least seven miles from the nearest fire, cancelled a string of performances at its outdoor Elizabethan Theatre due to heavy smoke; the Britt Festival Orchestra moved its outdoor performances in Jacksonville indoors, to North Medford High School, then had to cancel the final weekend. The Rogue River effectively shut down for a week to boating downstream from Grants Pass when the Taylor Creek Fire got too close for comfort. Rafting businesses in the Upper Rogue saw bookings drop because the smoke hung so heavy over the Shady Cove area. So even people who never feel the heat of the fire feel a different kind of heat, from a distance.

We seek what the firefighter seeks: bare mineral soil, the true answer to the question, the true statement of the politician about what she or he would do if elected.

And here's where we draw the line to the politicians asking for votes this fall, potentially—I stress *potentially*—another source of hot air. Some of them want to talk about forest management, some want to talk more broadly about climate change and working to affect the mechanisms by which we, the people, contribute to the changing of the planet we inherited. We have many questions for the people asking for votes.

And when I think about the process of doing our jobs as journalists, I'm reminded of one of the basic skills in wildland firefighting. My reporting trips to cover fire training stamped some of those lessons into my head. I didn't wield either shovel or Pulaski, but I watched the people who did. Key point: clear the vegetation, right down to the "bare mineral soil." It's just what it sounds like... when there's nothing left under your scraping tool but dirt and rock, you've created a place where fire can't go. That's the principle that gives us fire lines, and containment.

It's also something we need to keep in mind in reporting. We have many candidates to interview this fall, and we'll ask a lot of questions, hoping for honest answers. Most people at least try to give honest answers, but they also have agendas, things they'd rather talk about than the direct answer to the question. So they'll often wrap their responses in discussion of the agenda item they have in mind, sometimes to the point of not really answering the question.

So we as journalists need to continue to scrape. We seek what the firefighter seeks: bare mineral soil, the true answer to the question, the true statement of the politician about what she or he would do if elected. And if we don't get that, we're settling for something else: see the first two words, above.



Geoffrey Riley began practicing journalism in the State of Jefferson nearly three decades ago, as a reporter and anchor for a Medford TV station. It was about the same time that he began listening to Jefferson Public Radio, and thought he might one day work there. He was right.

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DON KAHLE

Housing Solutions Must Include Ownership Opportunities And More

Los Angeles County needs more affordable housing, in the same way that Los Angeles needs more freeways. The problem is undeniable, but the solution is not so simple. Each problem gets increasingly difficult and complicated because of one obstacle we can never overcome — people, and their habit of adapting to current conditions.

Maybe we're solving the wrong problem, devising the wrong solution, involving the government in the wrong places, and expecting the wrong outcomes. In other words, are we shaking the wrong end of the rattle?

The simplest solution is not the best one. We could disband our police forces and stop providing clean water. Once people have to boil their drinking water and put bars on their windows, housing prices will quickly become affordable. Problem solved! The situation sounds less than ludicrous if you live in rural Oregon, where clean water and police protection can no longer be assumed.

By some measures, our housing options are less affordable than almost any other area of the country. We're not one of the most expensive markets, but we are one of the least affordable, because our median annual income is a paltry \$38,460.

The government defines affordable as no more than 30 percent of a person's income, but it's not so simple on the ground where people are making their own lifestyle choices. Renters double up to live in a place they really like. They pay more for a location where they won't need a car. A good garden can reduce grocery expenses. Meeting real needs won't follow a one-size-fits-all approach.

Here's an approach we haven't tried. Instead of reducing a resident's lodging expense, what if we were able to increase their wealth? Most Americans who own their home have little or no additional savings. They're living inside their piggy bank. Housing in this way represents much more than simply a roof — it's also security, stability, and identity. Subsidized rental units provide only the roof.

Here's where we may be solving the wrong problem. Home ownership has floated out of sight for many. The American Dream has gone dark for them. If we recognize that home ownership represents much more than lodging, we might reorganize some of our efforts.

If we recognize that home ownership represents much more than lodging, we might reorganize some of our efforts.

Working only with current conditions, how much can an average person save? How long can they sustain that resolve? How much will banks lend a first-time home buyer?

Let's say most people can save ten percent of their income, so long as their goal is not more than two years away. Banks require 20 percent down and income verification when writing a mortgage. Plug in our area's median wage, and you have the parameters for an equity-based solution.

What sort of house could be sold for \$38,460? A very small one, on a very small lot — perhaps only 200 square feet of living space. A tiny space like that wouldn't work for everyone, and it may not be compatible in many neighborhoods, but it offers a very different approach to solving the original problem.

Given the choice between a subsidized rental or a small space that includes ownership, how many would choose the latter? We don't know, because it's not available. Small properties that are well-cared for will go up in value. That added equity can make a larger home attainable. The American Dream lacks only that modest first step.

Local government's hand in this solution would be relatively light. Bankers and builders and savers are doing what they naturally do. Market forces will need only a few well-placed nudges from government.

Minimum lot size in certain designated areas will need to be drastically reduced. System development charges would have to be prorated by square footage, or waived altogether for a short time. If this model is used to promote infill, limits should be put in place so neighborhoods can adjust appropriately. Owner occupancy requirements may prove necessary. Lenders may need incentives to handle such small loans.

Will it work? I don't know. Has it been tried elsewhere? Nowhere I can find. Could it lead to other strategies that work even better? I'm certain of that.



Don Kahle (fridays@dksez.com) writes a column each Friday for *The Register-Guard* and blogs at www.dksez.com.

The Dance.



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Snow In Midsummer Is A Triumph

S*now in Midsummer?*” said the lady at the box office as she handed me my tickets, adding “I wish!”

And there was a certain irony in the fact that the final production of this OSF season which is concerned, among other things, with strange weather phenomena, should open when the Rogue Valley was experiencing the uncomfortable and dangerous effects of heat and smoke. Indeed, as audience members walked into the Angus Bowmer Theatre, signs outside informed us that the outdoor production that night had been cancelled.

There was some laughter early on as characters commented on the drought and prayed for rain, but this is not a witty satire on our contemporary situation, specially written for 2018 Ashland: it is a reworking of an ancient story, set in a small Chinese village. It is a story of capitalism and injustice, of powerful men abusing vulnerable women, and of spiritual traditions threatened by ‘progress’. This production is, in part, a murder mystery, in part, a ghost story and, in total, it is a triumph. You may read on without fear: I include no plot-spoilers. It could just be the best non-Shakespeare serious drama which OSF has staged in years.

This adaptation by Frances Ya-Chu Cowhig was originally presented in England in 2017 by the Royal Shakespeare Company in Stratford, as part of their Chinese Classics Translations Project, a cultural exchange which has some parallels with OSF’s own Play on! project. It was directed there by Justin Audibert, who also directs this production. There are no members of the original Stratford cast in the OSF version, which features a number of actors who have been seen before at the Festival, and one newcomer whom I hope we see again.

It is always a pleasure to attend the opening performance of a play, to get the sense of the team behind a production enjoying seeing the fruits of their labour finally onstage, and, indeed, the whole OSF company supporting their colleagues. It is also an opportunity to see that people still like to dress up for the theatre – I myself was wearing new shoes!

This is a particularly strong cast, and, although not all the actors who are household names (yet!), there is no doubting the calibre of the acting pedigree of this ensemble. There are two central female roles in the play: Dou Yi, falsely accused and convicted of murder, who has been executed and now returns as a ghost to seek justice; and the businesswomen Tianyun, whose past connections to this village we learn as the play progresses. I was reminded at times of *Destiny of Desire* and its revelations of family relationships, but the revelations here are very different in tone and weight.

Dou Yi is played by Jessica Ko, who gave an outstanding performance last year as the Shapeshifter in *Hannah and the*

Dread Gazebo. She is magnificent in this role, not least in her vocal and emotional range. Tianyun is played by Amy Kim Waschke, whom we also saw in *Hannah and the Dread Gazebo*, and, in 2016, in a range of roles in *Vietgone*: she is completely immersed in this role, and, towards the end, I believe I saw real tears in her eyes. The male members of the cast include the excellent James Ryen, who was also in *Vietgone*, and Daisuke Tsuji, making a welcome return after playing a memorable Fool in *King Lear* in 2013.

The newcomer is Olivia Pham, a young girl from California not yet in high school. I calculate her to be ten years old: I have clothes older than that! She is an actor of consummate skill and a winning charm. Her role as Tianyun’s adopted daughter is pivotal: as a child she sustains a belief in traditional values and the older spiritual traditions. At one point she withdraws from the world, refusing to speak and forming an alliance with a factory worker who refuses to obey the evacuation order to leave the village.

This is at times a visually stunning production. There are dragons, there is dancing, there are rituals – but there is an economy of action, a flow between scenes, and an effectiveness of stage design and lighting. Its crucial moment is the speech by Dou Yi, a monologue just before her execution. This is a *coup de theatre* and the director has made the decision to bring up the house lights, thus implicating the audience in the execution and the diatribe against society which Dou Yi delivers. She accuses us of remaining silent in the face of injustice, and murmurings around me suggested that that message had hit home.

I’d like to comment on one other aspect of the direction, and that is that Justin Audibert trusts his actors to carry silence. There are pauses in delivery at a number of points of the play where characters weigh up their options. Another director would have had them rush on – Justin Audibert lets them ponder.

Snow in Midsummer runs for less than three months, and I could wish that it had been allotted a much longer season. I’ve been fortunate enough to see a lot of theatre in the past twelve months – in London and in Prague as well as more locally – this production moved me more than any other.



Geoff Ridden has taught in universities in Africa, Europe and North America. Since moving to Ashland in 2008, he has become a familiar figure on radio, in the theatre, in the lecture hall and on the concert stage. He is artistic director of the Classic Readings Theatre Company and has a particular interest in adaptations of the plays of Shakespeare. Email classicroadings@gmail.com

Classics & News Service



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8:00am First Concert
10:00am Opera
2:00pm Played in Oregon
3:00pm The Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center

4:00pm All Things Considered
5:00pm New York Philharmonic
7:00pm State Farm Music Hall

Sunday

5:00am Weekend Edition
9:00am Millennium of Music
10:00am Sunday Baroque
12:00pm Siskiyou Music Hall
2:00pm Performance Today Weekend
4:00pm All Things Considered
5:00pm Chicago Symphony Orchestra
7:00pm Center Stage From Wolf Trap
8:00pm State Farm Music Hall

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Oct 6 – *Moby Dick* by Jake Heggie

San Francisco Opera

Oct 13 – *Andrea Chénier* by
Umberto Giordano

Oct 20 – *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* by
Gioachino Rossini

Oct 27 – *Don Pasquale* by
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PHOTO BY CORY WEAVER



PHOTO: TOM SPECHT

Ana María Martínez returns to Los Angeles as opera's most seductive temptress in *Carmen*.

LEFT: Anna Pirozzi as Maddalena de Coigny in *Andrea Chénier*.

Rhythm & News Service



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3:00pm Q
4:00pm All Things Considered
6:00pm World Café
8:00pm Undercurrents
3:00am World Café

Saturday

5:00am Weekend Edition
9:00am Wait Wait...Don't Tell Me!
10:00am Ask Me Another
11:00am Radiolab
12:00pm E-Town
1:00pm Mountain Stage
3:00pm Live From Here with Chris Thile
5:00pm All Things Considered

6:00pm American Rhythm
8:00pm Q the Music / 99% Invisible
9:00pm The Retro Lounge
10:00pm Late Night Blues
12:00am Undercurrents

Sunday

5:00am Weekend Edition
9:00am TED Radio Hour
10:00am This American Life
11:00am The Moth Radio Hour
12:00pm Jazz Sunday
2:00pm American Routes
4:00pm Sound Opinions
5:00pm All Things Considered
6:00pm The Folk Show
9:00pm Live From Here with Chris Thile
11:00pm Mountain Stage
1:00am Undercurrents

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5:00pm On Point
7:00pm Fresh Air (repeat)
8:00pm The Jefferson Exchange (repeat of 8am broadcast)
10:00pm BBC World Service

Saturday

5:00am BBC World Service
7:00am WorldLink
8:00am Day 6
9:00am Freakonomics Radio
10:00am Planet Money
11:00am Hidden Brain
12:00pm Living on Earth
1:00pm Science Friday
3:00pm To the Best of Our Knowledge
5:00pm West Coast Live
6:00pm Selected Shorts
7:00pm BBC World Service

Sunday

5:00am BBC World Service
7:00am Inside Europe
8:00am On The Media
9:00am Marketplace Weekend
10:00am Reveal
11:00am This American Life
12:00pm Hidden Brain
1:00pm Political Junkie
2:00pm Fresh Air Weekend
3:00pm Milk Street Radio
4:00pm Travel with Rick Steves
5:00pm To the Best of Our Knowledge
7:00pm BBC World Service

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Archaeology And The Vernal Pool Fairy Shrimp

Archaeologists are often consulted when construction is planned in an area—that way, cultural resources can be identified, investigated, and in some cases, preserved before roads and buildings destroy them. In this story, archaeologists were brought in to aid in the *deconstruction* of an area slated for habitat restoration for a teeny creature unique to southern Oregon. In a recent episode of the *Jefferson Exchange's* “Underground History”, we spoke with Paul Benton, a biologist with the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT), about the agency's ongoing restorations at the vernal pool mitigation bank, home to the threatened vernal pool fairy shrimp (*Branchinecta lynchi*).

The Southern Oregon University Laboratory of Anthropology (SOULA) was hired to help with this project, not because we knew the first thing about fairy shrimp (our knowledge was basically limited to childhood experiences with “sea monkeys,” a brine shrimp cousin of the more impressive local variety), but because the parcel being restored had been heavily modified by the historical occupation of the site.

While gold originally spurred EuroAmerican settlement in Southern Oregon, by the 1860s the depleted mines were being replaced by a growing agricultural industry. Prime farmlands on the western side of the valley were quickly occupied, and by the latter part of the 19th century settlers began to look to the east for available land. At a glance, the grassy open meadows and oak trees that mark the Agate Desert would have looked attractive to would-be farmers and ranchers. However, this deceptively bucolic landscape consisted of mounds and shallow, poorly drained basins that would fill with water seasonally. This unique hydrology, which in part led to the area's nickname as “the Big Sticky,” is what marks the vernal pool habitat of modern interest, and what made it historically difficult for agriculture.

Our investigations revealed that historic modifications to the project area began with settlement under the 1862 Homestead Act. This act allowed US Citizen to settle on public land, and, providing that they improved and farmed it for a minimum of five years, they could file for a deed of title. We discovered the archaeological remains of at least two homesteads: The Kincaid family homestead (established in 1866) and the Bryant family homestead (established in 1893). Both claimed to have improved their homesteads by fencing and clearing land for agriculture, and constructing homes, barns and other outbuildings. Records indicated that the Kincaid family built a 16 by 30-foot “comfortable house to live in,” and the Bryant family built



Sharla Luxton (left) and Chelsea Rose with the excavation of the brick chimney at the Bryant family homestead.

a 30 by 18 foot box house with an attached kitchen, and a 40 by 40 foot barn with an attached shed.

While on paper these two families appeared to be typical homesteaders taking advantage of a generous opportunity, the excavations told another story. Archaeology allowed us to recognize the locations of buildings and activity areas, however, the age and volume of the artifact assemblages did not suggest a sustained occupation. Instead, it reflected the basic amount of effort needed to “prove up” on the claim, allowing the families to then cash in and move on—presumably to something more suitable. Additional research into the families indicated that the Kincaids were involved in early land speculation, and the Bryants were living in California during part of the five-year residency required under the Homestead Act.

Despite the scattering of homesteads, the Agate Desert remained largely undeveloped by the turn of the 20th century, and the inexpensive raw land and small farm holdings were readily purchased, consolidated, and sold to would-be orchardists. Partially improved or abandoned homesteads were popular acquisitions, as they offered cleared acreage for cheap. Settlers like the Bryants and Kincaids might have found it relatively simple to establish their homesteads, but not at all easy to sustain them. These lightly used estates were usually near roads and other infrastructure, and the discouraged farmers were often happy to be rid of them. Many of these parcels were

Continued on page 29

If they can identify which genes are changing to boost the females' hearing, they might be able to mimic that process in human ears.

Scientists Study 'Singing Fish' For Ways To Improve Human Hearing

You know that expression, "Leave no stone unturned?" That's how Washington State University neuroscientist Allison Coffin goes about catching midshipman fish – at least during mating season.

Standing on the rocky, oyster-covered shoreline of Hood Canal, she rolled over a beach-ball sized rock to reveal a small pool of water just barely covering two fish.

"Oh yeah! Another female," she said. "And then there's the male right there."

Because it's low tide, some of the fish she and her research partner Joe Sisneros uncovered aren't in any water at all.

That makes this area prime fishing grounds for the researchers, who say the ears of these fish could teach us how to improve our own hearing.

Singing Fish

Sisneros, a University of Washington neuroscientist, picked up a male fish to point out the pattern of white spots on its belly. Its spots glow in the dark, and they look a bit like the buttons on a midshipman's naval uniform – hence, the name.

As the fish struggled to free itself from his grasp, it made a noticeable buzzing sound.

"Hear him? That was a series of grunts," Sisneros said. "He's mad."

And grunting is just the beginning of the sounds this fish can make.

"When it gets dark, they start to sing," Coffin said. "It's a hum. There isn't a lot of variety to it. They only know one note. I guess it could be more like monks chanting in a way."

As the males are singing, the females pick a nest to release their eggs into. The bright orange eggs stick to the undersides of the rocks. So if a female has visited a male's nest, you can see the eggs by simply lifting the rock off the shore at low tide.

Is He A Stud Or A Dud?

On their recent trip, the researchers were looking for females in particular because they wanted to know more about what's going on inside their ears as they're picking their mates. At one point, Coffin found two females in one male's nest.

"So, this guy right here is apparently a stud," she said.

Sisneros said scientists have discovered that the females' hearing improves dramatically during the mating season, and they think they know why.



The photophores on the underside of the midshipman fish glow in the dark, and their pattern looks like the buttons on the naval uniform of a midshipman.

"One of the questions we want to look at is how do the females find the studs and avoid the duds, right?" he said. "These females are probably not assessing males based on vision. They can't see them at night. We think they're actually assessing the quality of the song."

Learning how is the focus of this research.

"We want to take the ear from the fish, keep the ear alive in a culture dish and then manipulate the genes," Coffin said.

If they can identify which genes are changing to boost the females' hearing, they might be able to mimic that process in human ears.

Finding The Genes

At her lab in Vancouver, Washington, Coffin dissects the ears of the female fish for a closer look at the genes that control hearing cells.

Fish are constantly making new hearing cells as they lose old ones.

"Unlike us, where we lose them and that's it, these fish can continue to make new ones," she said.

In the midshipman fish, Coffin thinks estrogen may be helping the females to generate – or protect – more hearing cells than they're losing.

But she needs to know which genes are making that happen and whether those genes could do something similar in our own ears.

Ultimately, she's looking for ways to turn those genes on in people using drugs or gene therapy. The first step is to compare the ears of the fish she finds in the winter with the ones mating under rocks right now.

Somewhere under the rocks in Hood Canal, she may find the secret to protecting people's hearing cells or even regenerating the ones we've lost.

"Nature is doing something really interesting in changing these fishes' hearing seasonally," Coffin said. "We're learning about nature, but we're also learning something we can apply to our own hearing."



Cassandra Profita is a reporter for EarthFix, an environmental journalism collaboration led by OPB in partnership with six other public media stations in Oregon, Washington and Idaho.

Underground History

Continued from page 27

then sold as tracts of "first class fruit lands." When prospective investors would question the viability of the shallow rocky soils of the Agate Desert, enthusiastic salesmen were quoted as promising that the rocks were an asset to the land—as they would heat up in the day and keep the orchard warm at night. The real estate boom was further spurred after the Medford Commercial Club formed in 1904 and promoted the region nationally as an agricultural Eden.

At the height of the boom, orchards reportedly turned over multiple times in a single night. By 1910, the lands in and around the current project area were developed into lots that could be individually sold to outside investors for a nominal fee. The Kincaid and Bryant homesteads became lot numbers 29 and 15 of the Roguelands Irrigated Orchards Tracts. Despite big promises, it was not until the 1920s that the parcels received water, and many of the struggling orchards were al-



SOU LABORATORY OF ANTHROPOLOGY

The remains of the brick chimney at the Bryant family homestead.

ready bankrupt. A new wave of orchardists came in during the 1920s and 30s, and the industry continues today in other parts of the valley.

As ODOT works to re-sculpt the artificially-leveled landscape back to the relic mounds and basins, we can reflect on what the archaeology has taught us about the families and corporations that owned and changed the land over time. The glass fragments, brick chimneys, and abandoned irrigation ditches found on this section of the Big Sticky represent more than the sum of their parts. Through these humble remains we can observe some of the choices, opportunities, and technology through which the Rogue Valley was shaped—not entirely by its successes, but also through its failures, frauds, and dreamers. This cycle of boom and bust is part of our region's ongoing story: whether it be gold, pears, or cannabis, people and products will continue to transform the world around us. This fall, as plants are harvested and land is bought and sold, the carefully restored basins will be filling with the autumn rain, and the fairy shrimp will quietly return to the Agate Desert.



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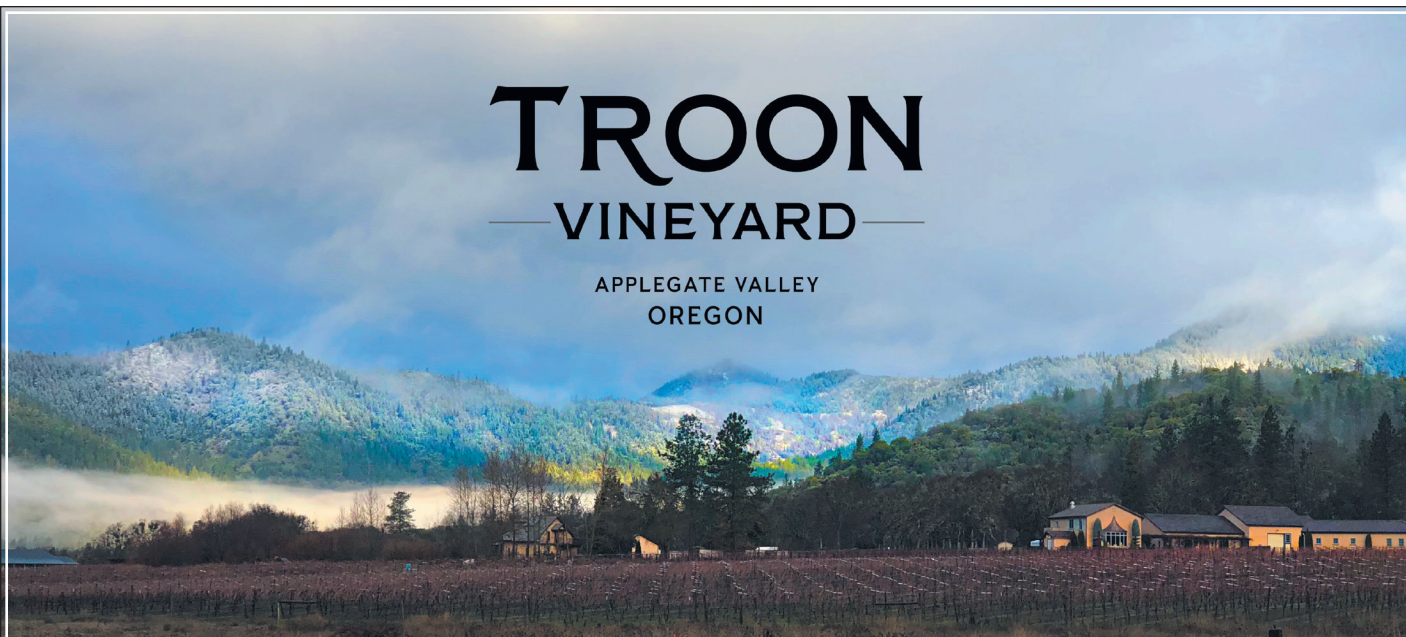
Shoe fragments recovered from the Kincaid family homestead.



Chelsea Rose is an archaeologist with the Southern Oregon University Laboratory of Anthropology (SOULA) and co-host of Underground History, a monthly segment that airs during the Jefferson Exchange on JPR's News & Information service.

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A Look Back In Time

Storm Chasers Looking For Lightning: Smokejumpers And The 1977 Hog Fire

The summer of 1977 was hot and dry in Northern California and Southern Oregon with days of 105 degree temperatures, no rain and winds that gusted to 34 mph. Through most of August, the Siskiyou Smokejumper Base in Cave Junction had planes out chasing lightning storms, locating the fires that would follow.

Smokejumpers are specially trained early strike teams who parachute into remote forests as a means of aggressive, early fire containment; the crews are under the administration of the U.S. Forest Service.

The Hog Fire started late in the day on Thursday, August 10, 1977 with lightning strikes in the Salmon River Ranger District of the Klamath National Forest. Four fires, at Fong, Poverty, Hog and Hammel, would become a complex named the Hog Fire, consuming 56,000 acres and involving more than 5,000 firefighters before it was contained on September 1.

The Siskiyou Smokejumper Base fire season report documents the situation starting with a 2:00 am call for help from the Klamath National Forest dispatch on August 11. The base dropped three smokejumper crews that day into different areas of the Salmon River Ranger District, in early morning, again at mid-day and finally towards evening.

Fire Season Report August 11 - "The Klamath N.F. had taken numerous ground strikes in the Salmon River R.D. around the Forks of the Salmon area. There were 16 fires in one section alone according to the dispatcher for the Klamath. The original two requests we received at 0206 were for 8 jumpers on the Breakfast Fire and 4 jumpers on the Lunch Fire. The fires were already 4 acres and ½ acre at the time of the request. Our crew was off the ground at 0550, and consisted of Thornhill, Wold, McCann, Osipovich, Koyama, Buck, Dehart, Cernick, Gozalez, Grijalva, Allen Owen, and Beck. Received another call from the Klamath for additional jumpers at 0645. All jumpers in the first load had jumped on the Breakfast Fire which was now at 10 acres. The request was for everything we had."

There were no fire roads back into these remote, mountainous areas and landslides along Salmon River Road from Soames Bar blocked crew and supply vehicles. An inversion layer trapped smoke low in the narrow valleys along the Salmon River and handicapped aircraft visibility. There were no communications between the fire boss and crews until the National Guard set up microwave transmitters, stations that had to be moved repeatedly as each peak was consumed by fire.

Fire Season Report August 11 - "Upon return to the base of our 23 jumpers, we found out our people had to abandon



PHOTO BY DOUG BECK

Smokejumper parachuting into active fire.

the fires due to rolling material and terrain and fall back to the Salmon River. All the fires and firefighters in the area were in the same predicament and all the fires eventually burned together to become the Hog Fire."

The Siskiyou smokejumpers weren't the only firefighters working the complex. The Eureka Times-Standard wrote that crews from Maine, Arizona, Colorado and California were on the scene to assist crews from Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana and Alaska. The Forks of Salmon general store reported a booming business selling beer, warm or cold, it didn't matter.

Continued on page 33



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Peter Serkin, piano
February 22-24, 2019

Masterworks 6

Tutunov and Beethoven *The Supreme Partnership*

Alexander Tutunov, piano
April 26-28, 2019



PHOTO BY DOUG BECK

Dropping cargo into an active fire.

Volunteer firefighters from communities all along the Salmon River turned out to work the blaze. Ruch Public Library manager, Thalia Truesdell, lived in Sawyers Bar at the time, one of the river towns that sent support. “There were seven of us with new babies so we were not able to work on the fire, and we were the only ones left in the town,” Truesdell recalls.

By August 14, the Salmon River District fires had grown to 5,000 acres with no sign of abatement and would shortly become a complex. Lightning storms brought more strikes and new fires started throughout the region.

Firefighters cut 103 miles of primary and secondary fire break, most of it by hand in steep, treacherous terrain. The fast moving fire surrounded crews several times, halting work as the firefighters retreated to safer ground.

Siskiyou Smokejumper Base Fire Season Report August 17 – “Thornhill is the Region-6 Explosive Fireline Expert and

was requested by Bud Clark (MSO), the explosive’s man on the fire. The crew blew 6,000 feet of fireline with good success and another 2,200 of fireline explosive was used to construct a helispot.”

Gary Thornhill was the Siskiyou smokejumper with explosives certification, trained to use a new rope-like explosive that could be laid along a path which was much more effective than sticks of dynamite. “We needed to get in and do it quick,” explains Thornhill. “We would start packing it in, each 100 foot roll weighing about 40 pounds.”

Thornhill’s effort along with determined effort on the part of many firefighters and a change in weather brought the Hog Fire to a close.

The US Forest Service authorized salvage logging of the Hog Fire acreage in November 1977, estimating 90 million board feet recovered from roadless areas near Orleans and Portuguese. By December 1977, 38 tons of grass seed, a mixture of rye, brome, timothy and clover, was seeded by air over 2,745 acres of the steep and erosive slopes of the burn.

In 1977, the Siskiyou Smokejumper Base responded to 62 fires with 388 fire jumps. The base, located outside of Cave Junction on Redwood Highway, began operation in 1943 and was decommissioned in 1981. The base was named to the National Historic Register in 2009 and is now a museum, open daily from May-September. For more information visit www.SiskiyouSmokejumperMuseum.org



Maureen Flanagan Battistella is a curator of the Stories of Southern Oregon collection for Southern Oregon University’s Southern Oregon Digital Archives. More Siskiyou Smokejumper Base photographs and the jump logs can be found at soda.sou.edu/stories/



PHOTO BY DOUG BECK

Siskiyou Smokejumpers after hiking out of the Hog Fire carrying 160 pound packs.

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Another study of 133 elderly women in the U.K. found that the more months of pregnancy they experienced during their lives, the lower their risk of developing Alzheimer's.

Hormone Levels Likely Influence A Woman's Risk Of Alzheimer's, But How?

There's new evidence that a woman's levels of female sex hormones, including estrogen and progesterone, can influence her risk of Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia.

Women are less likely to develop dementia later in life if they begin to menstruate earlier, go through menopause later, and have more than one child, researchers reported at the Alzheimer's Association International Conference in Chicago.

And recent studies offer hints that hormone replacement therapy, which fell out of favor more than a decade ago, might offer a way to protect a woman's brain if it is given at the right time, the researchers said.

The findings could help explain why women make up nearly two-thirds of people in the U.S. with Alzheimer's, says Maria Carrillo, the association's chief scientific officer.

"It isn't just that women are living longer," Carrillo says. "There is some biological underpinning. And because of the large numbers of women that are affected, it is important to find out [what it is]."

Scientists have long suspected that sex hormones such as estrogen and progesterone play a role in Alzheimer's. And two studies on dementia and what occurs during a women's reproductive years support that idea.

One of the studies looked at nearly 15,000 women in California. And it found an association between a woman's reproductive history and her risk of memory problems later in life.

The risk of dementia for women who had three or more children was 12 percent lower than the risk for women who had one child, according to Paola Gilsanz of Kaiser Permanente Northern California Division of Research, and Rachel Whitmer of the University of California, Davis.

Also, women who began to menstruate earlier and went through menopause later were less likely to develop dementia. Menopause at age 45 or younger seemed to increase the risk by 28 percent.

Another study of 133 elderly women in the U.K. found that the more months of pregnancy they experienced during their lives, the lower their risk of developing Alzheimer's.

The findings all suggest that female sex hormones — which rise at puberty and during pregnancy, then fall at menopause — are somehow affecting a woman's risk of developing Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia. The results also suggest

that greater exposure to these hormones, through more pregnancies or more reproductive years, can reduce a woman's risk.

But it's still not clear whether the mere presence of female sex hormones is a reason that the frequency of Alzheimer's is greater in women than in men.

One possibility is that it's not female sex hormones on their own, but rapid changes in their levels that are a problem, says Pauline Maki, a professor of psychiatry and psychology at the University of Illinois at Chicago, who presented research at the Alzheimer's conference.

"Women experience these very dramatic hormonal transitions that in the long run can give rise to Alzheimer's disease," she says.

One way for women to minimize the dramatic hormonal changes that occur at menopause is to use hormone replacement therapy.

That approach fell out of favor more than a decade ago when a large study found that women who took estrogen plus progestin after menopause were actually more likely to get some form of dementia. They also appeared to have a higher risk of heart disease and breast cancer.

But Maki says more recent studies suggest that hormone therapy — especially estrogen alone — really can be helpful if women get it at the right time.

"The effects of hormone therapy depend on the timing of use," Maki says. "Use later in life is detrimental, whereas use early in the menopausal transition could be beneficial."

An analysis presented at the Alzheimer's conference supports that idea.

It found that in two recent studies, women who started taking estrogen after age 65 were more likely to have trouble with thinking and memory. But women who started taking estrogen between 50 and 54 were not.

And estrogen may benefit the mental function of younger women because it reduces the hot flashes associated with menopause, Maki says.

"The more hot flashes a woman has, the worse her memory performance," Maki says, citing her own research. "And when we intervene to address those hot flashes, her memory performance bounces back."

Continued on page 36



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NPR Shots

Continued from page 35

Findings like that are renewing interest in the idea that someday, it may be possible to use hormones around the time of menopause to prevent Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia later on, Maki says.

In the meantime, there's evidence that hormonal differences between men and women may affect their brains in ways that affect doctors' ability to accurately diagnose Alzheimer's, Maki says.

At the Alzheimer's conference, she presented research showing that women tend to have higher verbal memory skills than men, even when they are in the early stages of Alzheimer's. As a result, women are likely to be diagnosed with the disease later than men.

It's unclear whether male hormones, such as testosterone, affect a man's risk of Alzheimer's.



Jon Hamilton is a correspondent for NPR's Science Desk. Currently he focuses on neuroscience, health risks, and extreme weather.

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BearCreekSalmonFestival.net

Jefferson Almanac

Continued from page 17

disappeared – whether driven off by the disturbance or taken by a predator, Trey never knew. She wandered away toward the east, hoping to find a patch of beetle-killed lodgepole pines. Then, one hot August day, she caught a delicious scent carried on the wind: the smell of smoke. Heart full of joy, Trey once again set off to find the fire.

Even with the eyes of an ecologist, it's not easy to see the beauty in a fresh black burn. But I know it is there: the new growth hidden beneath the ash, the birds that will flock to the forest of snags. For centuries, this landscape has owed much of its variety and vitality to fires. I may never share Trey's enthusiasm for smoke, but as I consider her exquisite adaptations, I find a new acceptance for this fire-prone place we have all chosen to call home.



Pepper Trail is an ornithologist, essayist, and poet living in Ashland, Oregon.

CHRISTOPHER JOYCE

For Jambeck, the plastic litter in all our lives is a sign of society's failure.

We're Drowning In Plastic Trash. Jenna Jambeck Wants To Save Us

When a huge floating gyre of plastic waste was discovered in the Pacific in the late 1980s, people were shocked. When whales died and washed ashore with stomachs full of plastic, people were horrified. When photographs of beaches under knee-deep carpets of plastic trash were published, people were disgusted.

Though some of it came from ships, most, presumably, was from land. But how much was coming from where?

No one really knew until 2015. That's when Jenna Jambeck, an environmental engineer at the University of Georgia, did the math. Her groundbreaking study suggested there were hundreds, and perhaps thousands, of times as much plastic washing into the sea as people were seeing in those ocean gyres.

Jambeck's findings helped galvanize a worldwide movement to stop plastic pollution.

When I first meet the scientist for an interview, the first thing she says is: "So what we're going to do for the next 24 hours is to record everything that you touch that is plastic."

My microphone has a plastic grip. "So let's write it down," she says with a smile and an air of efficiency.

We go through my recording kit: plastic ID card, the zipper on the bag, a plastic data card and the plastic audio recorder ...I can tell this is going to be a long day.

Jambeck started her career as an engineer specializing in solid waste management. She has become a connoisseur of trash, and what I carelessly call "the dump."

"Landfill!" she says, correcting me.

Her interest in trash started when she was growing up in rural Minnesota, Jambeck says. There was no garbage collection in her area, so she'd borrow a truck to take her family's trash to the dump every week.

"I was always pretty fascinated by going there and just seeing what I would see," she remembers. "I fell in love with studying waste."

Trash, she explains, has a history; each discarded teddy bear or broken bicycle has a story behind it.

We drive out to her favorite landfill, just outside Athens, Ga., and Jambeck makes it clear that we're not just going to view the garbage pile from afar. We're going to climb up onto it.

"It's such a beautiful day out here," she says. That's true. The sky is brilliantly blue. There are also vultures hovering overhead, and the aroma is — challenging. The ground is mushy, but that doesn't slow Jambeck; she came prepared, wearing green rubber boots.

"All right, I want to go farther," she says. She wants me to get a better idea of what plastic does in a landfill. Or, rather, what it doesn't do.



The single largest use for plastic is packaging, Jambeck says. At this recycling center in southeast Asia, much of the waste is thin-film plastic that was once used to package single-use beverage containers.

To me, the several-acre mound is a pile of dirt and muck about 50 feet high. Trucks crawl over it, dumping their loads of trash in plastic bags. Miscellaneous objects poke up out of the ground.

But Jambeck sees something different.

"I see, like, a living breathing thing," she says. "This whole system is actually an ecosystem. Microbes break down the organic garbage into its constituent chemicals. Metal corrodes and dissolves. Almost everything returns to the earth. Except ...

"Plastic," she says with a sigh. "Plastic would be the thing that doesn't break down."

It's the intruder. I look a little closer and see that almost all the junk on the surface of this pile is made of plastic. "A container of toothpaste," Jambeck points out. "That looks like the top of a detergent bottle." There's PVC pipe. Water bottles. A chip bag.

There are numerous types of plastic. Over time, much of it will break down into smaller pieces. But no one knows how long those pieces linger in the environment.

When people discovered big floating patches of waste plastic in oceans, they wanted to clean it up. Jambeck agrees that the famous giant garbage patch in the Pacific is a nightmare. But upon seeing it, her thought was: Wait a minute. Let's find out where it's coming from.

If you leave the tap on and bathwater floods your home, bailing water isn't the first thing you do, she points out. You shut off the faucet.



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“What we can do is keep plastic from going in the ocean in the first place,” she says.

Jambeck worked with a team of scientists at the National Center for Ecological Analysis and Synthesis in California to find the sources of all that plastic. Their seminal paper, published in 2015 in the journal *Science*, produced new information and astounding numbers.

Most of the trash along beaches and in the ocean is single-use plastic, Jambeck says — cigarette butts, grocery bags, bottles and caps, straws, utensils and packaging. Historically, most of it has been produced in the West, but China is now the top producer, and exporter of plastic goods.

Many countries, including the U.S., contribute plastic pollution, and it all adds up. For example, in 2010 alone (the year’s worth of data that Jambeck’s *Science* study was based on), a total of 8 million metric tons of plastic entered the world’s oceans.

The research made a big splash. In 2017, the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee invited Jambeck to testify about the problem.

Holding up a bag full of plastic trash, she explained to the senators that 8 million metric tons of plastic is equal to “a volume of five grocery-sized bags filled with plastic for every foot of coastline in the world.”

She predicts the “8 million” could be 10 times as large by 2025, if current trends continue. Half of the waste comes from China, the Philippines, Indonesia and Vietnam. (Note: Though Vietnam puts nearly as much plastic into the ocean per person as China does, the Chinese population is so much greater than Vietnam’s that China’s overall contribution to total plastic in the ocean is much larger).

All these countries have growing consumer economies and haven’t yet developed widespread and efficient methods of waste management. And they have lots of ocean-facing shoreline.

Research shows that the population density along the shoreline largely determines how much trash winds up in the ocean there: more people, more trash.

For Jambeck, the plastic litter in all our lives is a sign of society’s failure.

It’s our era’s footprint, she says. “Is that really the story we want to tell future generations?”

Jambeck is trying to change that story.

In 2017, the U.S. State Department sent the “plastics ambassador” to advise other governments on how to manage plastic waste. She’s also an adviser to the Ocean Conservancy, an environmental group working to stem the problem.

Jambeck helped develop an app called Marine Debris Tracker for smartphones so that anyone can report on where they find plastic debris, anywhere in the world. Her students at the University of Georgia use it to track plastic waste on campus.

Jambeck believes that kind of data-keeping — showing people just how ubiquitous plastic is — shapes public opinion.

“Now around the world people are reacting to that and trying to figure out what to do,” she says.

Scientists in her laboratory, as well as many in the private sector, are looking to broaden and improve the range of biodegradable substitutes for plastic utensils or packaging.

In many places around the world, consumers and government leaders are starting to pay more attention to what they use and throw away, and what they can recycle, Jambeck says. She’s collaborating with a team of scientists looking for a model for plastic waste management that communities can adopt.

And she still finds time to visit landfills, for sentimental reasons, among others: She was at a landfill in 2001 when she met the man who would become her husband. They were both doing research, digging into the very bottom of the landfill to see how things decomposed. To their surprise, they pulled up an immaculate piece of lunchmeat.

“It was a piece of bologna,” she says with a laugh. How did she know?

“Because it looked exactly like a piece of bologna from a package.”

And why did that surprise her? “Well, it still looked like a piece of bologna you could eat,” she says with amazement. “It hadn’t broken down.”

A romantic “bonding moment,” as Jambeck tells it, for this pair of professional garbage explorers. But she’s a bit more hesitant to eat lunchmeat.

Meanwhile, the aroma at the Georgia landfill is ripening as the sun reaches its zenith, but Jambeck seems in no hurry to leave. A noisy truck groans up the bank with a fresh load for a waiting bulldozer and a compactor, and she wants to explain the process to me.

“So they’re going to dump, and then the bulldozer is going to come and move it and then the compactor gets his turn to drive over it” — to compress it, to maximize how much waste can be stored here.

Our day isn’t over. My plastic count is due. Back at Jambeck’s office, we share the list. I touched 52 plastic items, all told: a credit card, restaurant menu, soap dispenser, my glasses, a ketchup container, an elevator button, a hotel chair — the list goes on and on.

In five minutes, she puts together graphs and a pie chart that show what kinds of plastic all these objects are made of — whether they can be recycled, and what sorts of plastic in the overall “taxonomy” of global plastic waste I’ve come in contact with that day.

“One of my goals,” Jambeck says, “is to get people more in touch with, and to be thoughtful [about], the waste they generate.”

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Christopher Joyce is a correspondent on the science desk at NPR. His stories can be heard on all of NPR’s news programs, including NPR’s *Morning Edition*, *All Things Considered*, and *Weekend Edition*.

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SPLENDID TABLE

LYNNE ROSSETTO KASPER
& SALLY SWIFT

Midnight Pasta With Prosciutto

The sauté can be prepared several hours ahead and tossed with the remaining ingredients just before serving. Once the pasta is in play, eat the dish while it's hot.

Late-night forays are an ignored yet vital dining category. The assumption is that we'll stand at the open fridge forking up sustenance directly from the storage container. Well, let's put a little class into the act, as in a dish from the Italian city of Parma, where the curing of ham is taken very seriously.

Ten minutes gives you a pasta of savory ham with bright-tasting tomato, garlic, onion, and a touch of barely melted sweet butter. This is the way to smooth out the end of a long day.

Cook to Cook: Prosciutto di Parma sets the bar high in the world of hams – never salty, it tastes of concentrated essence of good pork. Up until a while ago, no American ham matched it. Now there's Iowa's La Quercia, and no doubt more artisans will follow. Taste as you find them and see what you think. Also, prosciutto freezes well, so it's easy to keep on hand.

Wine: Look for a light but ripe Italian red, like a Valpolicella Ripasso from the Veneto.

Ingredients

4 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil or unsalted butter
2 large garlic cloves, halved
1 large onion, minced
3 tablespoons minced fresh flat-leaf parsley
4 to 5 ounces prosciutto di Parma or Iowa's La Quercia or good-quality salami, thin sliced and cut into thin strips
1 pound freshly cooked tagliatelle or fettuccine pasta, well drained
1 tablespoon unsalted butter
3 to 4 good-tasting ripe tomatoes (about 2 pounds), diced, or 1 28-ounce can whole tomatoes and a little of their liquid
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
1½ cups freshly grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese

Instructions

1. In a 12-inch sauté pan, heat the oil over medium heat. Add the garlic and cook, pressing it down in the oil, for 1 minute, or until slightly softened and pale golden. Do not burn. Pull the garlic from the pan and keep it handy.
2. Add the onion and parsley to the pan, cover, and cook over low heat for about 15 minutes, or until the onion is soft and clear. At this point the pan could be set aside off the heat until shortly before serving.
3. When ready to eat, return the pan to the stove and raise the heat to medium. Stir in one-fourth of the prosciutto and cook for about 2 minutes. The onion should just start to color. Add the reserved garlic and toss in the cooked pasta, butter, and tomatoes and the rest of the prosciutto. Toss over medium heat to thoroughly combine. Add salt and pepper to taste.
4. Turn the pasta into a serving bowl. Pass the cheese separately, but be certain to use it, as it is the final seasoning of the dish.

Pasta in Brief: Never add oil to the water; it won't keep the pasta from sticking; only boiling in a generous amount of water will.

Pasta water should taste like the sea. Be generous with the salt.

If the pasta box directs "rinse after boiling," put the box back on the shelf and walk away. It's a low-grade pasta.



Lynne Rossetto Kasper
is host of
The Splendid Table



Sally Swift is co-creator
and Managing Producer
of *The Splendid Table*

From *The Splendid Table's® How to Eat Weekends: New Recipes, Stories & Opinions from Public Radio's Award-Winning Food Show* by Lynne Rossetto Kasper and Sally Swift (Clarkson Potter/Publishers, 2011). Copyright © 2011 by American Public Media. Photographs copyright © 2011 by Ellen Silverman.

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AS IT WAS

As It Was is a co-production of Jefferson Public Radio and the Southern Oregon Historical Society. The series' script editor and coordinator is Kernan Turner, whose maternal grandmother arrived in Ashland in 1861 via the Applegate Trail.

As It Was airs Monday through Friday on JPR's Classics & News service at 9:30am and 1:00pm; on the News & Information service at 9:57am and 9:57pm following the *Jefferson Exchange*.

Jacksonville Miner Gains Fame By Enriching Others

By Sharon Bywater

In 1854, James Sterling and a partner dipped a sluicing pan into Sterling Creek near Jacksonville, Ore., and captured some gold nuggets. The two men agreed to keep their discovery secret until they could stake their claims.

Their pact didn't last long. Sterling's partner revealed the secret to a friend, and Sterling, still innocently dreaming of his fortune, stopped on his way home at a local tavern for a drink. Some say that beer loosened his tongue, and he, too, gave away the gold's location. The news spread quickly.

By the time Sterling went back to stake his claim, it was too late. A crowd of eager miners, including his erstwhile partner, had staked

claims up and down the creek, leaving Sterling with nothing.

Sterling never profited from the mining area that became one of the richest in Southern Oregon. But he did get credit for discovering it. The creek, the mine, the old town of Sterlingville, and Sterling Ditch, which brought more water into the creek for sluicing gold, are all named after James Sterling.

WORKS CITED: Haines, Francis D., and Vern S. Smith. *Gold on Sterling Creek: A Century of Placer Mining*. Medford, Ore., Gandee Printing Center, Inc., 1964; Plymale, W.J. "Discovery of Sterling Mine." *Mail Tribune* [Medford, Ore.], 27 Nov., 1903, p. 1.

Siskiyou County Bootleg Whiskey Gets High Marks

By Gail Fiorini-Jenner

Northern California historian Jim Denny has called Whiskey Gulch above Old Etna, Calif., "One of the nicest little whiskey stills that ever turned out illegal whiskey. It was only out of business when whiskey could be produced legally."

It was not always easy to purchase booze during the Depression, despite how many stills were scattered around Siskiyou County. A man named Riley ran one of the largest stills at Cinnabar Springs. Lester and Willis "Moon" Quigley packed in supplies on horses that carried out barrels of the finished product on their return trip. Riley also ran a still at Barkhouse Creek that produced a higher grade of whiskey by filtering it through gravel

and charcoal. From 1922 through 1925, there were 66 arrests for possession of alcohol, bootlegging, moonshining, and transporting liquor, whiskey, and other alcoholic beverages. Most convicted offenders received minimum sentences of 30 days in jail and fines as high as \$500.

From 1926 to 1933, the ratio of arrests to offenders remained relatively low, and it didn't take long to rebuild destroyed stills.

SOURCES: Denny, Jim. "Bootlegging in Etna." *Siskiyou Pioneer*, vol. 6, no. 7, 1994, p. 39; Betts, Doris Wohlfert. "Violators of Prohibition Act Arrested." *Siskiyou Pioneer*, vol. 6, no. 7, 1994, p. 49.

POETRY

MANYA ORESCAN

Praying Something Strange

On especially quiet days I can hear the sound of fish splitting open. Seeds trapped in dry stomachs and the shallow humming of an extra organ.

And even though her face is lit up like Jade and vermillion, her eyes more like a lunar eclipse have drifted far away.

She chooses to wear my skin on cool nights/says she's never loved like this before. I eat as many persimmons as I can get away with.

Lying has never been an option for us. I often wake up transparent under the memory of massacred roots/blackened cassava. Then I plant azaleas underground for her.

Beautiful monsters love me from the deep blue mosaics that are my insides. They lunge with the quickness of screaming drums, pressed and transformed by snarky exchanges and the unearthly wailing of troubled women.

Being human is profane/absurd. Is glorious and sexy. Is right and wrong meeting somewhere and doing something.

A daughter's sweet voice/a happiness of turning beats/she/like perfect holds horizons between my toes.

Little East Village

1.
Is that the smell of freedom
On the river's tongue
Or the spill and rapture
Of wild buffalo
In an epic face-off
With bodies and machines
Nomadic heart rivers that
Stop by in cars,
Campers, caravans
And hollowed out canoes
Four hundred sisters
Nations sun-dancing
Their backs hot against
The sacred black hills

2.
Stone camps erect on salt cedar
And wailing bones
Brittle with tellers of the future
Big oil greed
Bullets and allies
Who's fighting and why
Has all become a reality show
With more than four hundred arrested
Backs muddled against chain-link fencing
While dogs feast on ankles
And eat arteries like appetizers
It's back to cavalry riding
Through dark blue nights and
Hands left unwashed

3.
Pipes stacked like dominos
Big horn-mountains watch
Quietly aging
As prayer sites unbury themselves
Under dogs' jaws and
Stern mouths of riot gear
Children search through tent city
For rediscovered power
And ancient ones
Carve their language
Into the stone hearts
That lay all around
The cross-tribal sea
Of raised fists

4.
Dressing bullet wounds
With wild plants that leak
Like mother's milk
Tattooing history as
Pink-tongues wag
From all four corners, and
Obsidian teeth scatter like confetti
Across burnt down plains,
Sashaying mountain hips
And strawberry stained hills
That stand tall
In the uprising against
Paper rights that float by
Sun-burned feet

5.
Assimilate back into the black
Flesh of elderberries
Outside the pointed toes of
Aging pipes
That groan and grunt and sigh
And threaten to break stomachs
Heavy with toxic jewels
That bring the scent of poison
And genocide
To one's lips
Instead of cool clay and
The medicine of dogwood
That thrives on the sandbars
Of the Missouri river

Manya Orescan is a student of Creative Writing at Southern Oregon University. She has published poetry in women's magazines and in the college's small-press collections *Main Squeeze* and *Essential Oil*. She uses poetry as a way to break free from apathy, to move and torment with moments of beauty/reflection and rage.

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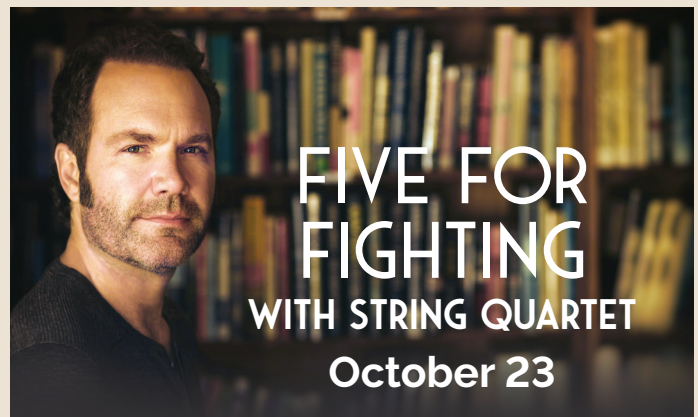
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